

Today's News - Wednesday, September 7, 2011

- Goldberger ponders whether the new WTC is - and will be - successful: "The people will not come back, but the life of the city has to...you feel the profound connection between these two truths" (even though some big-name architects haven't "produced anything close to their best work").
- A travel writer looks at the 9/11 Memorial as a "dark tourist site": "Absence is clearly an overriding draw of Ground Zero."
- Volner and Chaban take on the "trade in 9/11 tchotchkies" (it's going strong); and the official 9/11 flag, the "newest piece of the Memorial economy" (not exactly architecture, but very interesting/amusing/depressing).
- New planning initiatives protect agriculture and nature while still accommodating growth; now all they need is a new name (new urbanism doesn't quite cut it - perhaps "agriburbia" or "new ruralism" will catch on).
- Evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson continues to explain his contention that evolution is among the factors that drive community involvement.
- Cary debunks 5 myths about pro-bono design work: it doesn't mean "free" design or sub-par results, and the payoffs "are not insignificant."
- Murphy cheers much of the National Museum of Scotland's makeover - but at what cost (and he doesn't mean money).
- A first look at Cloepfil's Clyfford Still Museum that was "no easy assignment" (the architect "must be glad that the legendarily ornery Abstract Expressionist is dead").
- Boddy examines Bing Thom's career: "In an architectural landscape that rewards bland competency, he gets the strange but wonderful commissions - or more accurately, he makes them strange and wonderful" (though "Thom's Toronto lessons were hard").
- Tischler tackles how Thom used Twitter and Facebook to design a library on a "draconian deadline" that was "barely long enough for a quick chat in the city hall parking lot."
- Henriquez's post-Woodward's project "exudes a sense of levity" and "emanates transparency."
- Kapoor and Isozaki create mobile (inflatable!) concert hall that will tour earthquake-damaged Japan.
- An eyeful of FLW's last standing hotel in Iowa: even the naysayers are saying yay: "I was against the project all along. Now I have goosebumps."
- Rockwell makes a pilgrimage to the Sir John Soane's Museum in London and "and gorges on design tips in the breakfast parlor."
- Hammond and David tell their 10-year saga of how they beat the odds in making the High Line a reality.
- In "Structure of Spirit, Design of the Heart" at AIA HQ, photographer Kenneth M. Wyner creates "a fantastical version" of Washington's architecture + "Design Story Tales" programs look oh-so intriguing.
- The jury tags 17 projects to take home a SADI Award.

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Shaping The Void: How successful is the new World Trade Center? ...various architects...none of whom, at least so far, have produced anything close to their best work...The people will not come back, but the life of the city has to. When you stand in [the] park and look toward the footprints ringed by names and the new towers behind them, you feel the profound connection between these two truths. By Paul Goldberger -- Rafael Viñoly; Daniel Libeskind; David Childs/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Fumihiko Maki; Norman Foster/Foster + Partners; Rogers Stirk Harbour; Snøhetta; Aedas; Frank Gehry; Santiago Calatrava; Michael Arad; Peter Walker- New Yorker

9/11 Memorial: Ground Zero as Dark Tourist Site: Visitors are expected to flock to the National September 11 Memorial and Museum...the memories of what had been are fading into the dust of time and new construction...dark tourism — the visiting of sites associated with death...a relatively new field of tourism research, but the idea has long been with us..."the architecture of absence is now the model" for most dark tourism sites. Absence is clearly an overriding draw of ground zero... By Michael T. Luongo- Miller-McCune

The Memorial Economy: Never Forget? It'll Cost Ya: At Ground Zero, the Trade in 9/11 Tchotchkies is Going Strong: ...the demand for 9/11 merchandise is real, and among those who feel it, the impulse is heartfelt. By Ian Volner + The Official 9/11 Flag, Newest Piece of the Memorial Economy. By Matt Chaban- New York Observer

Rescuing the Rural Edge — It Takes a Village: New planning initiatives protect agriculture and nature, while still accommodating growth...Fresno could be the poster child for sprawl...a plan now under consideration...would apply the principles of new urbanism at much greater intensity...some now feel it may be too visionary...There are developers who are simply resistant to changing how they build.

By Jonathan Lerner -- Calthorpe Associates; Town Planning and Urban Design Collaborative; TSR Group; Clarke Caton Hintz; SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture Education)- Miller-McCune

Can Evolution Breed Better Communities? Evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson believes that evolutionary principles work...on the community level. He contends that evolution is among the factors that drive community involvement...his new book, "The Neighborhood Project: Using Evolution to Improve My City, One Block at a Time."...how he applied these principles in this project in Binghamton.- National Public Radio (NPR)

Five Myths About Pro Bono Design: The author of "The Power of Pro Bono" debunks the common assumptions about this virtuous work, starting with the meaning of the term...Myth #1: Pro bono design means free design. By John Cary- Fast Company

National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh: Gareth Hoskins Architects has brought cohesion and crowds...but the price to pay is heavy...now one is made to feel as if one is entering via the servants' stairs...new alterations seem to arise from a confused agenda and...suffer not from their radicalism but rather from their timidity and a misplaced deference towards the original structure. By Richard Murphy -- Francis Fowke (1861); Benson + Forsyth (1998); Ralph Appelbaum [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

First Look at the New Clyfford Still Museum in Denver: Designing a museum for an artist known for his terribilità is no easy assignment, which is why Brad Cloepfil...must be glad that the legendarily ornery Abstract Expressionist is dead...museum is a hard, Brutalist structure...subtly echoing the jagged edges of Still's signature abstractions. -- Allied Works Architecture [slide show]- Artinfo

Learning Curve: A look at Bing Thom's career presents an argument for an oft-overlooked and misunderstood West Coast architect...In an architectural landscape that rewards bland competency...[he] gets the strange but wonderful commissions - or more accurately, he makes them strange and wonderful. By Trevor Boddy [images]- Canadian Architect

How Twitter And Facebook Helped Bing Thom Design A Public Library: What do you do when your funding for a civic project [a new library in Surrey, British Columbia] requires significant public comment - but your deadline is barely long enough for a quick chat in the city hall parking lot? Turn to social media, of course. By Linda Tischler [images]- Fast Company

Vancouver architect Gregory Henriquez takes on a post-Woodward's task: After the gravitas of Woodward...latest residential project – a 14-storey tower at 6th and Fir – exudes a sense of levity...design-wise it emanates transparency...But the sense of community imperative...continues with this tower. -- Henriquez Partners Architects [image]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Anish Kapoor and Arata Isozaki create mobile concert hall: Ark Nova project will tour earthquake-damaged Japan with artistic performances...includes seating for between 500 and 700 spectators within an inflatable shell made of an elastic material

that allows quick erection and dismantling. -- Nagata Acoustics; Theatre Projects [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Wright landmark Park Inn Hotel restored in Mason City: ...the last standing hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright..."I was against the project all along. Now I have goosebumps"...the building feels greater than the sum of its parts. -- Bergland and Cram [slide show]- Des Moines Register (Iowa)

The Lived-In Look: David Rockwell makes a pilgrimage to the antiquities-stuffed Sir John Soane's Museum in London — and gorges on design tips in the breakfast parlor...The museum has indirectly influenced many details in his own oeuvre... -- Rockwell Group [images]- Wall Street Journal

The Inside Track On New York City's High Line: It took 10 years of fundraising, permit applications, feasibility studies, and wooing city and state officials, but Robert Hammond and Joshua David beat those odds. They tell the story of how they did it in a book out next month, "High Line: The Inside Story of New York City's Park in the Sky." [slide show]- National Public Radio (NPR)

"Structure of Spirit, Design of the Heart": Photographer Kenneth M. Wyner digitally transforms familiar Washington scenes and domestic interiors into something otherworldly...to create a fantastical version of the city's architecture..through Oct. 28 at the American Institute of Architects + A series of "Design Story Tales" to be held during September and October. -- Travis Price Architects; Blackburn Architects; Lorena Checa Architects; Ponte Mellor Architects [slide show]- Washington Post

22nd Annual Superior Achievement in Design and Imaging (SADI) Awards: the jury tabbed 17 projects... FRCH Design Worldwide; GHA Design Studios; Giorgio Borruzo Design; Herschman Architects; Ruscio Studio; Little; BL Companies; RTKL Associates; The Jerde Partnership/Omniplan; CMH Architects; Ware Malcomb; Field Paoli [images]- Retail Traffic magazine



Henning Larsen Architects: Harpa - Reykjavik Concert Hall & Conference Centre, Reykjavik, Iceland -- Olafur Eliasson

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